

GSA Board of Contract Appeals

6101.11

limit access to them on the ground that such documents are privileged or confidential, or sensitive in some other way. The moving party must state the grounds for such limited access. The Board may also determine on its own initiative to hold materials under such conditions. The manner in which such materials will be held, the persons who shall have access to them, and the conditions (if any) under which such access will be allowed will be specified in an order of the Board. If the materials are held under such an order, they will be part of the record of the case. If the Board denies the motion, the materials may be returned to the party that submitted them. If the moving party asks, however, that the materials be placed in the administrative record, *in camera*, for the purpose of possible later review of the Board's denial, the Board will comply with the request.

(2) A party may also ask, or the Board may direct, that testimony be received under protective order or *in camera*. The procedures under paragraph (c)(1) of this section shall be followed with respect to such request or direction.

(d) *Review and copying.* Except for any part thereof that is subject to a protective order or deemed an *in camera* submission, the record in a Board proceeding shall be made available for review at the Office of the Clerk of the Board during the Board's normal working hours, as soon as practicable given the demands on the Board of processing the subject case and other cases. If a request is made for copies of documents, and if making such copies involves more than minimal costs to the Board, reimbursement will be required. If a request is made for a copy of a transcript which was prepared pursuant to a contract with the Board, the fee charged by the Board for a copy of the transcript will be at the rate established by the contract. When required, the Office of the Clerk will certify copies of papers and documents as a true record of the Board. Except as provided in 6101.17 and 6101.32 (Rules 17 and 32), the Office of the Clerk will not release any part of the record in its possession to anyone.

6101.10 Admissibility of evidence [Rule 10].

In general, any relevant and material evidence will be admitted into the record. The Board may exclude evidence to avoid unfair prejudice, confusion of the issues, undue delay, waste of time, or needless presentation of cumulative evidence. Hearsay evidence is admissible unless the Board finds it unreliable or untrustworthy. As a general matter, and subject to the other provisions of 6101.10 [Rule 10], the Board will look to the Federal Rules of Evidence for guidance when it makes evidentiary rulings.

[73 FR 26950, May 12, 2008]

6101.11 Conferences; conference memorandum [Rule 11].

(a) *Conferences.* The Board may convene the parties in conference, either by telephone or in person, for any purpose. The conference may be stenographically or electronically recorded, at the discretion of the Board. Matters to be considered and actions to be taken at a conference may include:

(1) Simplifying, clarifying, or severing the issues;

(2) Stipulations, admissions, agreements, and rulings to govern the admissibility of evidence, understandings on matters already of record, or other similar means of avoiding unnecessary proof;

(3) Plans, schedules, and rulings to facilitate discovery;

(4) Limiting the number of witnesses and other means of avoiding cumulative evidence;

(5) Stipulations or agreements disposing of matters in dispute; or

(6) Ways to expedite disposition of the case or to facilitate settlement of the dispute, including, if the parties and the Board agree, the use of alternative dispute resolution techniques, as provided in 6101.51 and 6101.54 (Rules 51 and 54).

(b) *Conference memorandum.* The Board may issue a memorandum of the results of a conference, an order reflecting any actions taken, or both. A memorandum or order so issued shall be placed in the record of the case and sent to each party. Each party shall have 5 working days after receipt of a

6101.12

memorandum to object to the substance of it.

6101.12 Suspensions and dismissals [Rule 12].

(a) *Suspension of proceedings to obtain contracting officer's decision.* The Board may in its discretion suspend proceedings to permit a contracting officer to issue a decision when an appeal has been taken from the contracting officer's alleged failure to render a timely decision.

(b) *Suspension for other cause.* The Board may suspend proceedings in a case for good cause, such as to permit the parties to finalize a settlement. The order suspending proceedings will prescribe the duration of the suspension or the conditions on which it will expire. The order may also prescribe actions to be taken by the parties during the period of suspension or following its expiration.

(c) *Dismissal, generally.* A case may be dismissed by the Board on motion of either party. A case may also be dismissed for reasons cited by the Board in a show cause order to which a response has been permitted. Every dismissal shall be with prejudice to reinstatement of the case except as specified in paragraph (d) of this section.

(d) *Dismissal without prejudice.* When circumstances beyond the control of the Board prevent the continuation of proceedings in a case, the Board may, in lieu of issuing an order suspending proceedings, dismiss the case without prejudice to reinstatement within 180 calendar days after the date of the dismissal. When a case has been dismissed without prejudice and neither party has timely requested that the case be reinstated, the case shall be deemed to be dismissed with prejudice on the last day such a request could have been made.

(e) *Issuance of order.* The presiding judge alone may issue an order suspending proceedings. An order of dismissal shall be issued by the panel of judges to which the case has been assigned if the motion is contested or if the Board is acting consequent to its own show cause order. An order of dismissal may be issued by the presiding

48 CFR Ch. 61 (10-1-10 Edition)

judge alone if the motion to dismiss is not contested.

[72 FR 36795, July 5, 2007, as amended at 73 FR 26951, May 12, 2008]

6101.13 General provisions governing discovery [Rule 13].

(a) *Discovery methods.* The parties are encouraged to exchange documents and other information voluntarily. In addition, the parties may obtain discovery by one or more of the following methods:

(1) Depositions upon oral examination or written questions;

(2) Written interrogatories;

(3) Requests for production of documents, electronically stored information, or other tangible or intangible things; and

(4) Requests for admission.

(b) *Scope of discovery.* Except as otherwise limited by order of the Board, the parties may obtain discovery regarding any matter, not privileged, which is relevant to the subject matter involved in the pending case, whether it relates to the claim or defense of a party, including the existence, description, nature, custody, condition, and location of any books, documents, electronically stored information, or other tangible or intangible things, and the identity and location of persons having knowledge of any discoverable matter. It is not a ground for objection that the information sought will be inadmissible if the information sought appears reasonably calculated to lead to the discovery of admissible evidence.

(c) *Discovery limits.* The Board may limit the frequency or extent of use of the discovery methods set forth in 6101.13 (Rule 13) if it determines that:

(1) The discovery sought is unreasonably cumulative or duplicative, or is obtainable from some other source that is more convenient, less burdensome, or less expensive;

(2) The party seeking discovery has had ample opportunity by discovery in the case to obtain the information sought; or

(3) The discovery is unduly burdensome and expensive, taking into account the needs of the case, the amount in controversy, limitations on the parties' resources, and the importance of the issues at stake.